AMENDED CLAIMS FILED UNDER ART. 34 PCT.

CLAIMS

1. A method for diagnosing an individual as being atopic, or as having a predisposition to atopy, which method comprises demonstrating in a nucleic acid sample taken from an individual the presence or absence of an allele which is associated with atopy, wherein the allele is situated at a locus in a region of chromosome 13 of up to 1 megabase in length, which region contains the locus D13S273, the presence of the allele D13S273*4 being indicative of a predisposition to asthma.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the method comprises the steps of:
   (i) obtaining a suitable tissue sample from the individual;
   (ii) preparing from the tissue sample a nucleic acid sample;
   (iii) analysing the nucleic acid sample for the presence or absence of the allele.

3. The method according to claim 2, wherein prior to analysis, the locus at which the allele is situated is amplified.

4. The method according to claim 3, wherein the amplification is by the PCR.

5. The method according to any on of the claims 1 to 4, wherein the locus at which the allele is situated comprises microsatellite repeats of variable lengths.

6. The method according to claim 4 or claim 5, wherein amplification is performed using a pair of primers each of which hybridise under suitably stringent conditions to a region either side of the microsatellite repeats.

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7. The method according to any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein the allele for identification is D13S273*4.

8. The method according to any one of claims 3 to 7, wherein the analysis is carried out by size separation of amplification products.

9. The method according to claim 7, wherein the primers in the pair of primers comprise the oligonucleotide sequences identified by SEQ ID NO: 1 and SEQ ID NO: 2 or substantially similar sequences.

10. A pair of oligonucleotide primers for amplification of an allele which is associated with atopy, which allele is situated at a locus in a region of chromosome 13 of up to 1 megabase in length, which region contains the locus D13S273, but not including the region containing the locus D13S153.

11. The pair of oligonucleotide primers according to claim 10, one of which is labeled with a detectable marker.

12. The pair of oligonucleotides according to claim 10 or claim 11, capable of hybridising under suitably stringent conditions to a region either side of a region of microsatellite repeats at D13S273.

13. The pair of oligonucleotide primers according to claim 12, comprising the oligonucleotide sequences identified by SEQ ID NO: 1 and SEQ ID NO: 2 or similar sequences.

14. An assay kit which comprises the pair of oligonucleotide primers according to any one of claims 10 to 13.